A TERMINOLOGY-BASED RE-DEFINITION OF GREY LITERATURE

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GREY LITERATURE DEFINITION

- The Luxembourg Convention on Grey Literature held in 1997 offered the following definition of Grey Literature (expanded in New York, 2004):

  "Information produced *and distributed* on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in electronic and print formats not controlled by commercial publishing, *i.e. where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body".*

OTHER DEFINITIONS (I)

- GL had been for many years synonymous with *reports literature :* from the beginning of 20th century *documents evolving out form research and development, particularly from the aircraft and aeronautics industries were a very important means of communicating the results of research testing* (C.P. Augur 1989)

- In the ‘70s GL was recognized as *dissemination vehicle for many organizations [..]* though not easy to find (C.P. Augur 1989)

- In the ‘90s GL became a necessary component of effective literature searching and *attained its importance as a separate medium of communication because of an initial need for security of confidentiality classifications which prevent documents being published in conventional manner* (C. P. Augur 1989)

OTHER DEFINITIONS (II)

- P. Hirtle (1991) defines GL as *the quasi-printed reports, unpublished but circulated papers, unpublished proceedings of conferences, printed programs from conferences, and the other non-unique material which seems to constitute the bulk of our modern manuscript collections.*
- IGLWG (1995) defines GL as *"open source material that usually is available through specialized channels and may not enter normal channels or systems of publication, distribution [..]"*
- M. C. Debachere (1995) describes GL as *a range of materials that cannot be found easily through conventionally channels [..] but which is frequently original and usually recent.*
- Wikipedia (2010) quotes "*Grey Literature is a term used [..] to refer to a body of materials that cannot be found easily through conventional channels such as publishers [..]"*

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Is the Luxembourg definition still valuable?
- Is it completely satisfactory?

- Considering other conventionally accepted definitions, does the idea of GL as information produced and distributed by non-commercial publishing take into consideration the increasingly availability and the growing importance of computer-based encoding as the standard medium of creating and developing GL?

- ...or do the definitions rather need modifications?

OUR GENERAL IDEA

- An interesting re-definition of GL can be based upon careful examination of the longitudinal trend of more than 20 years of terminological creativity in the 11 GL International Conference proceedings.

- A domain-specific document repository offers the possibility to pave the way to a bottom-up redefinition of Grey Literature stemming from attested terminological creativity and lexical innovation.

REFERENCE CORPUS

- The Corpus of *GreyText Inhouse Archive,* available on http://www.greynet.org/opensiglerepository.html represented our empirical basis, consisting of:
  - *titles*
  - *themes*
  - *keywords*
  - *full abstracts*

  for a total amount of almost seventy thousand word tokens.

METHODOLOGY

- We focussed on a set of automatically-acquired terms (both single-word and multi-word terms) obtained by subjecting our reference Corpus to a number of pre-processing steps of automated text analysis, such as concordances, frequency lists (selected from around 70,000 words with a higher frequency than 9) and lexical association scores (e.g. *Mutual information* on word pairs).

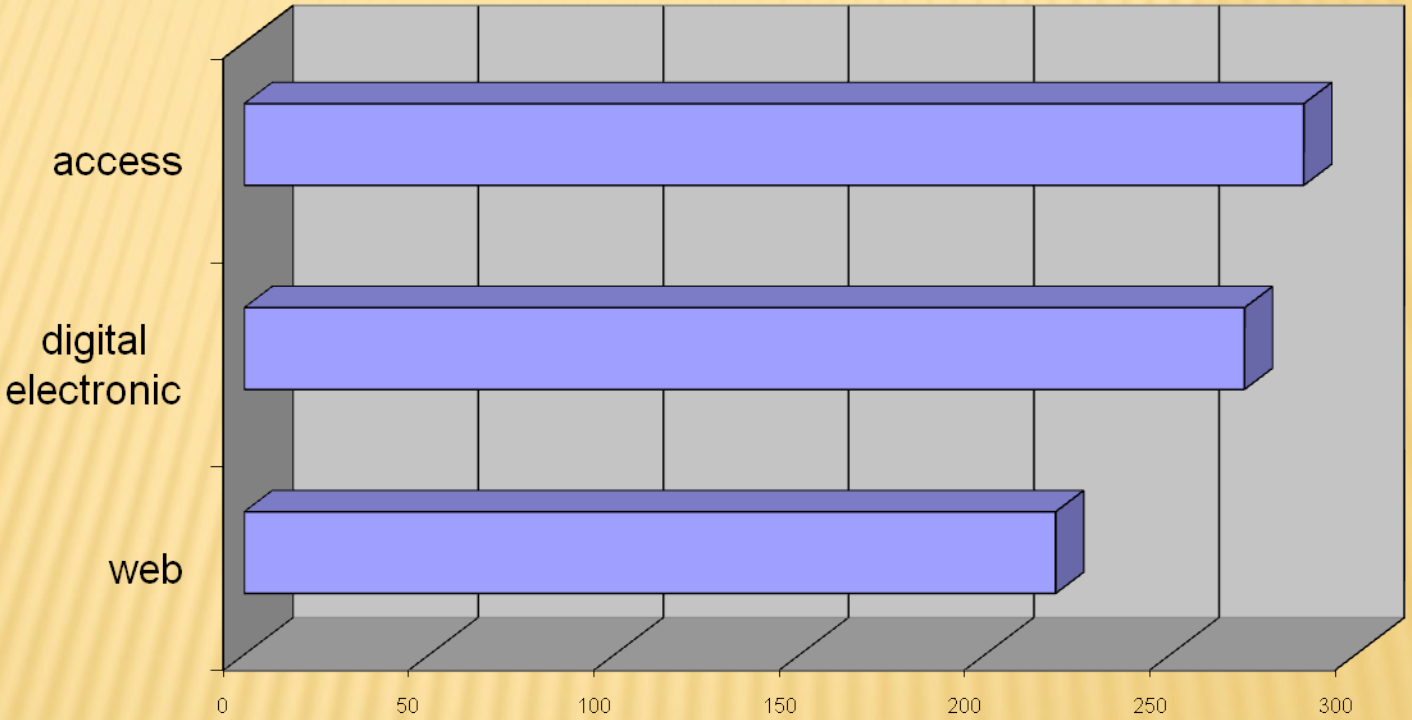
- Through manual inspection/classification of relevant list of concordances, we analyse the most relevant terms.

DATA EXTRACTION

Word frequency list

985 grey
966 literature
737 **information**
477 research
220 **access**, conference
204 library
202 paper
191 documents
182 scientific
178 proceedings
162 development
159 project
142 **electronic**
137 system
130 use
128 science
128 **digital**
126 report
124 available
121 libraries, open, technical
120 data, national
119 collection
106 public
104 **knowledge**
103 publishing, university
102 study
100 results
98 international
97 resources, technology
95 metadata
92 repository
91 users
88 published
85 database, publications, **web**
84 academic, document
83 analysis
82 authors
80 communication
77 management
75 services
74 countries
73 researchers
72 government, **internet**, repositories
70 work
69 materials
68 health, projects, world
67 databases
65 community
64 bibliographic, theses
63 survey, systems
61 european, sigle, social
57 content
40 **accessible**
32 **online**
30 **www**
26 **accessibility**
…

RESULTS (I)



RESULTS (II)

We then considered lexical association scores between salient terms, focussing on terminological usages that are closely related to the mentioned ontological entities.

- **access:** *easy, electronic, facilitate, full, grey, information, internet, journals, literature, materials, movement, multicultural, open, public, repository, research, scientific.*
- **digital:** *document, grey, library, literature, network, object, project, repository, system, technology, theses.*
- **electronic:** *format, grey, information, journal, literature, network, paper, publication, report, resource, technical, theses.*
- **web:** *access, database, grey, information, network, literature, science.*
- **knowledge**: *base, exchange, generation, infrastructure, management, scientific, service, share, society,* and, especially, *information*.

RESULTS (III)

Digital/electronic, access, web mark in our view important stages in the evolution of our current understanding of GL :

- the attribute d*igital/electronic* emphasises the growing importance of computer-based encoding as the *standard medium* of GL;
- the noun *access* (defining the process of accessing text documents) together with adjectives like *easy*, *full*, *grey* and *open* shapes up important conceptual innovations in the way GL material is distributed (o*pen access* focuses on the free accessibility of digital contents); coupled with *information, document* and *repository,* it points to a conception of world-wide available, structured cultural contents;
- reference to the *web* lays emphasis on the huge importance of the www as the standard means of disseminating GL.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

GL defines an innovative approach/methodology for information dissemination and exchange

- web-based sharing and distributed access to openly available scientific/technical document repositories

key notions

- medium: electronic/digital files
- distribution channel: internet/web
- information access policy: distributed, unrestricted
- access tools: repositories, web browsers, search engines

Promotion of new, creative modes of production and use of knowledge!